



For Immediate Release

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***ENZI JOINS EFFORTS TO IMPROVE EDUCATION, INCREASE
AMERICAN GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS;
COSPONSORS "NATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS INVESTMENT ACT"***

Washington, D.C. - U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, today announced that he will be joining a bipartisan group of Senators, including Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-TN) and Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV), in their efforts to improve education and prepare more competitive workers for world-class jobs, by co-sponsoring the "National Competitiveness Investment Act," S. 3936.

"If our students and workers are to have the best chance to succeed in life and employers to remain competitive, we must ensure that everyone has the opportunity to achieve academically and obtain the skills they need to succeed," Enzi said. "This bill is a good starting point in finding ways to support and encourage high school students to take challenging courses and prepare for and enter high-skill fields such as math, science, engineering, health, technology and critical foreign languages. For many, including those at the cutting-edge of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, acquiring some postsecondary education or training will be the key to their success."

The "National Competitiveness Investment Act" is a bipartisan legislative response to recommendations contained in the National Academies' "Rising Above the Gathering Storm" report and the President's American Competitiveness Initiative. The bill also contains input from members of three Senate committees, including key proposals from the Senate Commerce and Senate Energy Committees.

S. 3936 focuses on maintaining and improving United States' innovation in the 21st Century by increasing research investment, strengthening educational opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics from elementary through graduate school, and developing an innovation infrastructure.

"I commend my colleagues for their efforts in bringing this vital legislation to the forefront of the debate on America's long-term competitiveness," Enzi added. "Like me,

they understand that the availability of seamless lifelong education opportunities is critical for our long-term competitiveness. In this global economy, learning is never over. School is never out.”

A summary of the National Competitiveness Investment Act follows.

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SUMMARY OF THE “NATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS INVESTMENT ACT”

The National Competitiveness Investment Act is a bipartisan legislative response to recommendations contained in the National Academies’ “Rising Above the Gathering Storm” report and the Council on Competitiveness’ “Innovate America” report. Several sections of the bill are derived from proposals contained in the “American Innovation and Competitiveness Act of 2006” (S.2802), approved by the Senate Commerce Committee 21-0, and the “Protecting America’s Competitive Edge Through Energy Act of 2006” (S.2197) approved unanimously by the Senate Energy Committee. Accordingly, the National Competitiveness Investment Act focuses on three primary areas of importance to maintaining and improving United States’ innovation in the 21st Century: (1) increasing research investment, (2) strengthening educational opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics from elementary through graduate school, and (3) developing an innovation infrastructure. More specifically, the National Competitiveness Investment Act would:

Increase Research Investment by:

- Doubling funding for the National Science Foundation (NSF) from approximately \$5.6 billion in Fiscal Year 2006 to \$11.2 billion in Fiscal Year 2011.
- Setting the Department of Energy’s Office of Science on track to double in funding over ten years, increasing from \$3.6 billion in Fiscal Year 2006 to over \$5.2 billion in Fiscal Year 2011.
- Establishing the Innovation Acceleration Research Program to direct federal agencies funding research in science and technology to set as a goal dedicating approximately 8% of their Research and Development (R&D) budgets toward high-risk frontier research.
- Authorizing the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) from approximately \$640 million in Fiscal Year 2007 to approximately \$937 million in Fiscal Year 2011 and requiring NIST to set aside no less than 8 percent of its annual funding for high-risk, high-reward innovation acceleration research.

- Directing NASA to increase funding for basic research and fully participate in interagency activities to foster competitiveness and innovation, using the full extent of existing budget authority.
- Coordinating ocean and atmospheric research and education at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and other agencies to promote U.S. leadership in these important fields.

Strengthen Educational Opportunities in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Critical Foreign Languages by:

- Authorizing competitive grants to States to promote better alignment of elementary and secondary education with the knowledge and skills needed for success in postsecondary education, the 21st century workforce, and the Armed Forces, and grants to support the establishment or improvement of statewide P-16 education longitudinal data systems.
- Strengthening the skills of thousands of math and science teachers by establishing training and education programs at summer institutes hosted at the National Laboratories and by increasing support for the Teacher Institutes for the 21st Century program at NSF.
- Expanding the Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program at NSF to recruit and train individuals to become math and science teachers in high- need local educational agencies.
- Assisting States in establishing or expanding statewide specialty schools in math and science that students from across the state would be eligible to attend and providing expert assistance in teaching from National Laboratories' staff at those schools.
- Facilitating the expansion of Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs by increasing the number of teachers prepared to teach AP/IB and pre-AP/IB math, science, and foreign language courses in high need schools, thereby increasing the number of courses available and students who take and pass AP and IB exams.
- Developing and implementing programs for bachelor's degrees in math, science, engineering, and critical foreign languages with concurrent teaching credentials and part-time master's in education programs for math, science, and critical foreign language teachers to enhance both content knowledge and teaching skills.

- Creating partnerships between National Laboratories and local high-need high schools to establish centers of excellence in math and science education.
- Expanding existing NSF graduate research fellowship and traineeship programs, requiring NSF to work with institutions of higher education to facilitate the development of professional science master's degree programs, and expanding NSF's science, mathematics, engineering and technology talent program.
- Providing Math Now grants to improve math instruction in the elementary and middle grades and provide targeted help to struggling students so that all students can master grade-level mathematics standards.
- Expanding programs to increase the number of students from elementary school through postsecondary education who study critical foreign languages and become proficient.

Develop an Innovation Infrastructure by:

- Establishing a President's Council on Innovation and Competitiveness to develop a comprehensive agenda to promote innovation and competitiveness in the public and private sectors.
- Requiring the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a study to identify forms of risk that create barriers to innovation.